

## Extremely dry for much of North Island; wet for South Island

<b>Rainfall</b>	Record dry for Northland, Auckland, Waikato, Coromandel, Bay of Plenty, and Masterton. Less than half January normal rainfall across most of the North Island, excluding the coastal margin between Wanganui and the Kapiti Coast, and Wellington. In contrast, it was very wet for much of South Island. Rainfall exceeded 150 percent of January normal from Queenstown to Gore, as well as Central Otago, Nelson and Marlborough. More than double the usual January rainfall was recorded around Mt. Cook, the Kaikoura Coast, and parts of north Canterbury.
<b>Soil moisture</b>	As at 1 February 2013, extreme soil moisture deficit (more than 130 mm of deficit) was evident in Northland, Auckland, Waikato, the Bay of Plenty, Gisborne, Hawkes Bay, Wairarapa, as well as Wanganui to Palmerston North, around Christchurch, and in Central Otago. Significant soil moisture deficit (more than 110 mm of deficit) was generally seen elsewhere in the North Island, eastern Otago and south Canterbury.
<b>Sunshine</b>	Extremely sunny across New Zealand. The combination of northwest winds and the 'blocking high' resulted in record January sunshine across the eastern South Island.
<b>Temperature</b>	Above average in the east and south of the South Island, eastern Northland and Auckland, Wairarapa, and between Wanganui and Napier. Below average for coastal Fiordland and Westland. Near average temperatures elsewhere.

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### Overview

January 2013 was a month of two halves – and two Islands. During the first half of the month, more northwesterly winds than usual affected the South Island, bringing unsettled weather and several heavy rainfall events to the South Island. But high pressures prevailed over the North Island during this time – meaning any fronts actually making it across the North Island “fizzled” – producing very little rainfall. The second half of January was characterised by an intense ‘blocking high’ which became slow moving over, and to the east of, the country. This produced extremely sunny and dry conditions for New Zealand over the second half of the month. The net result overall was an extremely dry January for the North Island, but a relatively wet month for the South Island. January rainfall totalled less than 10 percent of normal across much of Northland, Auckland, Coromandel, and parts of the Waikato and Bay of Plenty. It was the driest month on record for

Warkworth, Whitianga and Te Puke, and the driest January observed in Masterton. For the main population centres of Auckland, Hamilton and Tauranga, monthly rainfall totalled less than 10 mm, and ranked near-record low. Rainfall totals were less than half of January normal across much of the rest of the North Island, excluding Wanganui to the Kapiti Coast (where rainfall was below normal) and Wellington (with totals about 120 percent of normal). In stark contrast, it was a very wet January across most of the South Island. Rainfall exceeded 150 percent of January normal from Queenstown to Gore, as well as Central Otago, Nelson and Marlborough. More than double the usual January rainfall was seen around Mt. Cook, the Kaikoura Coast, and in parts of north Canterbury. Closer to normal rainfall was observed in coastal Westland and Fiordland, as well as Dunedin, Christchurch and coastal south Canterbury.

As at 1 February 2013, extreme soil moisture deficit (more than 130 mm of deficit) was evident in Northland, Auckland, Waikato, the Bay of Plenty, Gisborne, Hawkes Bay, Wairarapa, as well as Wanganui to Palmerston North, around Christchurch, and in Central Otago. Significant soil moisture deficit (more than 110 mm of deficit) was generally observed elsewhere in the North Island, as well as the remainder of Otago and south Canterbury.

The combination of northwest winds, and high pressures, resulted in record or near-record high January sunshine totals across the eastern South Island. It was the sunniest January on record for Christchurch, Cheviot, Ashburton, Lake Tekapo, as well as Waipawa (Hawkes Bay). It was also the sunniest month on record for all of these sites, except Christchurch, which logged its second-sunniest month after December 1988. Sunshine totals were generally above normal (between 110 and 125 percent of January normal) for the remainder of New Zealand, with the exception of Northland, Auckland, Wellington and Blenheim (with near normal sunshine observed).

Mean temperatures were above average (between 0.5°C and 1.2°C above the January average) in the east and south of the South Island, along the eastern coastline of Northland and Auckland, in the Wairarapa, and between Wanganui and Napier. In contrast, below average temperatures were observed for coastal Fiordland and Westland. Elsewhere, mean temperatures were near average. The nation-wide average temperature in January 2013 was 17.3°C (0.2°C above the 1971-2000 January average), using NIWA's seven-station temperature series which begins in 1909.

Further Highlights:

- The highest temperature was 35.1 °C, recorded at Clyde on 5 January (record-equal for January there), and at Gisborne on both 9 and 10 January.
- The lowest temperature was -0.5 °C, observed at Hanmer Forest on 18 January.
- The highest 1-day rainfall was 346 mm, recorded at Mount Cook on 9 January (a new January record there).
- The highest wind gust recorded was 161 km/hr at Cape Turnagain, on 8 January.
- Of the six main centres in January 2013, Auckland was the warmest, Dunedin the coolest, Wellington the wettest, and Tauranga the driest and sunniest.

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## Rainfall: A tale of two Islands; an extremely dry January for much of the North Island but very wet across the South Island.

January rainfall totalled less than 10 percent of normal across much of Northland, Auckland, Coromandel, and parts of the Waikato and Bay of Plenty. It was the driest month (of any month) on record for Warkworth, Whitianga and Te Puke, and the driest January on record at Masterton. For the main population centres of Auckland, Hamilton and Tauranga, monthly rainfall totalled less than 10 mm, and ranked as either the 2nd-lowest or 3rd-lowest January rainfall in the record. It was also very dry across much of the rest of the North Island, with rainfall totals generally less than half of normal. The exception was the coastal margin between Wanganui and the Kapiti Coast (between 60 and 100 percent of January normal) and for Wellington (with totals about 120 percent of normal).

In stark contrast, much of the South Island received above normal rainfall (between 120 and 149 percent of January normal). Rainfall exceeded 150 percent of January normal from Queenstown to Gore, as well as Central Otago, Nelson and Marlborough. Notably, more than double the usual January rainfall was observed around Mt. Cook, the Kaikoura Coast, and in parts of north Canterbury. Closer to normal rainfall was experienced along coastal Westland and Fiordland, as well as around Dunedin, Christchurch and coastal south Canterbury.

### Record<sup>1</sup> or near-record January rainfall totals were recorded at:

Location	Rainfall total (mm)	Percentage of normal	Year records began	Comments [*any-month rank]
Low records or near-records				
Kaitia	4	6	1948	2nd-lowest
Kaikohe	13	11	1956	4th-lowest
Dargaville	12	17	1943	4th-lowest
Whangarei	6	8	1937	3rd-lowest
Leigh	8	12	1966	2nd-lowest
Warkworth	6	7	1966	Lowest [*Lowest]
Whitianga	4	5	1961	Lowest [*Lowest]
Toenepi	8	10	1951	3rd-lowest
Tauranga	4	5	1898	2nd-lowest
Te Puke	3	3	1973	Lowest [*Lowest]
Taupo	14	19	1949	4th-lowest
Motu	70	54	1990	4th-lowest
Auckland (Mangere)	6	10	1959	2nd-lowest
Auckland (Airport)	9	14	1959	3rd-lowest
Hamilton	7	9	1905	3rd-lowest
Masterton	18	30	1992	Lowest
Waione	32	43	1991	3rd-lowest

<sup>1</sup> The rankings (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>.etc) in all Tables in this summary are relative to climate data from a *group* of nearby stations, some of which may no longer be operating. The current climate value is compared against all values from any member of the group, without any regard for homogeneity between one station's record, and another. This approach is used due to the practical limitations of performing homogeneity checks in real-time.

High records or near-records				
Mt Cook	1018	241	1928	3rd-highest
Waipara West	102	177	1973	3rd-highest
Lumsden	145	151	1982	2nd-highest
South West Cape	165	153	1991	3rd-highest

As at 1 February 2013, extreme soil moisture deficit (more than 130 mm of deficit) was evident in Northland, Auckland, Waikato, the Bay of Plenty, Gisborne, Hawkes Bay, Wairarapa, as well as Wanganui to Palmerston North, around Christchurch, and in Central Otago. Significant soil moisture deficit (more than 110 mm of deficit) was generally observed elsewhere in the North Island, as well as the remainder of Otago and south Canterbury.

### Sunshine: Extremely sunny. Records broken across the eastern South Island.

The combination of northwest winds, and high pressures, resulted in record or near-record high January sunshine totals across the eastern South Island. It was the sunniest January on record for Christchurch, Cheviot, Ashburton, Lake Tekapo, as well as Waipawa (Hawkes Bay). It was also the sunniest month (of any month) on record for all of these sites, except Christchurch which logged its second-sunniest month, after December 1988. Sunshine totals were generally above normal (between 110 and 125 percent of January normal) for the remainder of New Zealand, with the exception of Northland, Auckland, Wellington and Blenheim (with near normal sunshine observed).

#### Record or near-record January sunshine hours were recorded at:

Location	Sunshine hours	Percentage of normal	Year records began	Comments [*any-month rank]
High records or near-records				
Te Kuiti	261	127	1962	3rd-highest
Taumarunui	275	135	1947	4th-highest
Turangi	266	118	1976	4th-highest
New Plymouth	304	123	1972	2nd-highest
Dannevirke	272	123	1963	2nd-highest
Martinborough	266	114	1986	4th-highest
Gisborne	308	124	1905	2nd-highest
Waipawa	298	148	1945	Highest (*Highest)
Paraparaumu	294	123	1953	2nd-highest
Hokitika	270	123	1912	3rd-highest
Greymouth	262	130	1947	3rd-highest
Cheviot	306	132	1983	Highest (*Highest)
Ashburton	290	147	1930	Highest (*Highest)
Christchurch	289	121	1930	Highest (*2nd Highest)
Lake Tekapo	325	125	1928	Highest (*Highest)
Dunedin	237	131	1947	3rd-highest
Cromwell	306	122	1979	2nd-highest
Invercargill	241	130	1932	4th-highest
Balclutha	265	154	1964	2nd-highest

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**Temperature:** Above average temperatures in the east and south of the South Island, eastern Northland and Auckland, Wairarapa, and between Wanganui and Napier. Below average temperatures for coastal Fiordland and Westland. Near average temperatures elsewhere.

Temperatures yo-yoed somewhat during the month. Temperatures soared unusually high (even for January) in eastern regions during several strong northwesterly events (most notably on 5, 7, 10, 30 and 31 January), but an unusually cold southerly airstream affected the country on 18 January, leaving a brief legacy of cooler air.

Overall, mean temperatures for January as a whole were above average (between 0.5°C and 1.2°C above the January average) in the east and south of the South Island, in patches along the eastern coastline of Northland and Auckland, in the Wairarapa, and between Wanganui and Napier. It was the warmest January on record for Masterton, in a 21-year record. In contrast, below average January temperatures (between 0.5°C and 1.2°C below the January average) were observed along the Fiordland and Westland coastline. Elsewhere, mean temperatures were near average (within 0.5°C of the January average).

The nation-wide average temperature in January 2013 was 17.3°C (0.2°C above the 1971-2000 January average), using NIWA's seven-station temperature series which begins in 1909<sup>2</sup>.

**Record or near-record mean air temperatures for January were recorded at:**

Location	Mean air temp. (°C)	Departure from normal <sup>3</sup> (°C)	Year records began	Comments
High records or near-records				
Leigh	20.6	1.1	1966	4th-highest
Masterton	19.8	2.4	1992	Highest

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<sup>2</sup> Interim monthly value

<sup>3</sup> This climate summary uses the updated 'normal' period, 1981-2010, unless otherwise stated. (A 'normal' period is a 30 year window of time from which the normal (average) and percentage of normal are calculated from).

## January climate in the six main centres

In January 2013, Auckland, Hamilton and Tauranga experienced extremely dry and sunny conditions. Sunshine was also extremely high (record or near record) in Christchurch and Dunedin. Temperatures across all of the centres, except Dunedin, were near January average.

In January 2013, Auckland was the warmest, Dunedin the coolest, Wellington the wettest, and Tauranga the driest and sunniest, of the six main centres.

### January 2013 main centre climate statistics:

Temperature			
Location	Mean temp. (°C)	Departure from normal (°C)	Comments
Auckland <sup>a</sup>	19.9	+0.3	Near average
Tauranga <sup>b</sup>	19.8	+0.3	Near average
Hamilton <sup>c</sup>	18.4	+0.1	Near average
Wellington <sup>d</sup>	17.2	+0.3	Near average
Christchurch <sup>e</sup>	17.4	+0.2	Near average
Dunedin <sup>f</sup>	15.8	+0.5	Above average
Rainfall			
Location	Rainfall (mm)	% of normal	Comments
Auckland <sup>a</sup>	6	10%	2 <sup>nd</sup> -lowest January total on record
Tauranga <sup>b</sup>	4	5%	2 <sup>nd</sup> -lowest January total on record
Hamilton <sup>c</sup>	11	14%	Extremely low
Wellington <sup>d</sup>	88	117%	Near normal
Christchurch <sup>e</sup>	37	104%	Near normal
Dunedin <sup>f</sup>	67	92%	Near normal
Sunshine			
Location	Sunshine (hours)	% of normal	Comments
Auckland <sup>a</sup>	255	110%	Near normal
Tauranga <sup>b</sup>	301	115%	Above normal
Hamilton <sup>e</sup>	258	111%	Above normal
Wellington <sup>d</sup>	263	106%	Near normal
Christchurch <sup>e</sup>	289	121%	Highest January [2 <sup>nd</sup> highest for any month]
Dunedin <sup>f</sup>	237	131%	3 <sup>rd</sup> highest for January

<sup>a</sup> Mangere <sup>b</sup> Tauranga Airport <sup>c</sup> Hamilton Airport <sup>d</sup> Kelburn <sup>e</sup> Christchurch Airport <sup>f</sup> Musselburgh <sup>g</sup> Ruakura

## Highlights and extreme events

### Rain and slips

The highest 1-day rainfall experienced in January was 346 mm, observed at Mount Cook on 9 January (this was a new January 1-day rainfall record at this site). Manapouri and Lumsden also experienced record or near-record high January 1-day rainfalls during this event (see following Table).

On 1 January, the Milford Track was closed after heavy overnight rain caused the Arthur and Clinton Rivers to flood the track in several places. A trumper on the Kepler Track was airlifted out, suffering from hypothermia.

On 2 January, extreme rain on the West Coast resulted in a washout of the Whanganui River Bridge on SH6 near Harihari. The bridge also carried the fibre optic cables, cutting all telecommunications to Westland. South Westland dairy farmers were forced to dump their milk. Cell towers at Fox Gracier, Franz Josef and Mt Hercules were also damaged. SH6 was also blocked by a slip between Inangahua and Westport in the lower Buller Gorge. Flooding closed sections of SH73 from Cass, through Arthur's Pass to Otira.

On 7 January, a large slip closed the Waikato River western bank walkway in Hamilton about 400 m south of Fairfield Bridge.

On 9 January, the Milford Track was closed again because of extremely intensive rain and high winds. The Clinton River flooded the track with water waist-deep and storm-force winds affected Mackinnon Pass. Flooding closed SH94 between Lumsden and Te Anau, and a washout closed SH6 4 km north of Makarora. Gore's northern and western suburbs were flooded, with water coming very close to residential property, but no houses had to be evacuated. Cars on the road to Milford Sound were stopped at Cascade Creek because of fears of flooding. Further north, Shotover Jet, Dart River Jet and Skippers Canyon Jet operations were suspended, and some flood-prone roads were closed.

On 10 January, one lane of SH73 was closed by a slip between Cass and Arthur's Pass. Flooding affected SH73 between Arthur's Pass and Springfield, SH94 between Lumsden and Te Anau, SH6 at the intersection with Harvey Road and also between Invercargill and Winton, SH96 at the intersection with Murchison Road, SH1 near Gore and between Mataura and Invercargill, SH94 at Croyden, and SH99 between Invercargill and Wallacetown. Many secondary roads across Southland were also closed by flooding. Rafting and kayaking operations in Otago were closed.

On 11 January both the Routeburn Track and the Milford Track were closed after heavy rain caused flooding. In Gore, the Mataura River burst its banks, and many more Southland roads were closed.

On 14 January, heavy rain caused surface flooding on SH1 near Paekakariki, disrupting commuter traffic heading south. In Nelson, heavy rain caused flooding in several homes and businesses in the city, and several local roads were closed. The Waimea River burst its banks and a group of tourists

had to be rescued when their campervans, parked on the river bed, were swept downstream. In Golden Bay, the Wainui River overflowed, closing the road between Totaranui and Takaka.

On 15 January, Tahunanui Beach was closed to swimmers because the heavy rain of the 14th caused sewage overflows into Waimea Inlet. Heavy rain in Christchurch caused the Avon River to swell, with water flooding on to streets in Avondale and New Brighton. In the Wellington region, downpours caused surface flooding in Porirua city, Titahi Bay and Wellington city.

On 16 January, Wellington region beaches at Lyall Bay, Island Bay, Sorrento Bay, Rona Bay and Riversdale Lagoon were closed for swimming after heavy rain caused street rubbish to be washed through the storm water system, increasing the likelihood of bacterial infections.

On 17 January, Picton beaches were closed for swimming after heavy rain caused sewage to flow into the ocean. In Wellington, Island Bay beach remained closed. Trains on the steep Johnsonville line in Wellington were slower than usual because the heavy rain had made the tracks slippery.

#### **Record or near record January extreme 1-day rainfall totals were recorded at:**

<b>Location</b>	<b>Extreme 1-day rainfall (mm)</b>	<b>Date of extreme rainfall</b>	<b>Year records began</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Mahia	44	6th	1990	2nd-highest
Nelson	90	14th	1941	4th-highest
Arthurs Pass	240	1st	1906	4th-highest
Mt Cook	346	9th	1928	Highest*
Manapouri	66	9th	1963	2nd-highest
Lumsden	68	9th	1982	Highest
South West Cape	49	12th	1991	4th-highest

\*This is the 4<sup>th</sup> highest all-time (any month) 1-day rainfall total at Mount Cook on record.

#### **Wind**

The highest wind gust recorded in January was 161 km/hr, observed at Cape Turnagain, on 8 January.

On 1 January, the fireworks display planned to welcome in 2013 at Oriental Bay in Wellington was cancelled because of the extreme wind gusts.

On 2 January, strong winds caused delays, cancellations and diversions of flights into and out of Wellington Airport. In the suburb of Johnsonville, power lines crashing together caused a power cut. A power pole was also blown over in Seatoun.

On 3 January, strong winds in Wairarapa blew trees down on to power lines, cutting power to about 500 homes. In Marlborough, the wind blew over trees up to 80 years old, and stirred dust clouds. In Ashburton, a small twister uprooted 30-year old birch trees and scattered debris across fairways at a golf course.



On 7 January, campers at Hahei on the Coromandel Peninsula had to take shelter after high winds destroyed tents, brought down power poles, and upturned picnic tables. Power was out for several hours. In Waihi, the fire brigade was called to help pull down a large marquee at the Waihi Beach Hotel after it was destroyed by high winds. Trees were blown down in Auckland, Hamilton, Whangamata and Turangi. In Renwick, a woman narrowly avoided being flattened inside her car when an 8 m tree was uprooted by strong winds. Near Nelson, a man suffered head injuries after an alloy dinghy became airborne in high winds in the Abel Tasman National Park. Trees in the Nelson area were uprooted, including Tahunanui Drive and Aniseed Valley. Roofing blew off commercial and domestic buildings, including one at Nelson Airport, and about 30 tents were taken down at the Tahunanui Camping Ground. Strong winds also buffeted Manawatu, bringing down power lines and cutting power to more than 1000 homes around Feilding and Sanson. The winds also brought down a high-voltage wire in Halcombe, causing a small grass fire.

On 9 January, wind warnings were issued for SH73 at Arthur's Pass and SH7 at Lewis Pass. Rangers had to escort trampers over the alpine section of the Kepler Track because of the extreme winds buffeting the high country.

On 10 January, motorists were advised not to use SH2 over the Rimutaka Hill because of severe gales. Two accidents occurred when a motorcyclist was blown from his bike, and a caravan towed by a car rolled onto its side. Flights into and out of Wellington were affected, with about ten domestic flights cancelled or delayed, and one international flight diverted to Auckland. In the city, trees were brought down, property was damaged, cyclists were advised to use other forms of transport, and walkers were told the town belt walks could be hazardous because of flying pine cones. In Nelson, the wild weather delayed the departure of a coastal tanker, kept a luxury charter yacht in port, and disrupted the national P-class yachting regatta on most days. The persistent winds over the Nelson province since the start of the year had also damaged horticultural crops, with boysenberries, raspberries, plums, pears, apples, kiwifruit, and vegetables affected.

On 11 January, a twister was reported in Kaikoura, cutting power when flying roof iron brought down the lines, uprooting trees and causing property damage. In South Canterbury, the wind uprooted trees, including some toppled on to SH79 near Fairlie.

On 12 January, the strong winds caused problems at a kite festival in Wanaka, with conditions too rough for the biggest kites.

On 13 January, wind warnings were issued for SH73 between Arthur's Pass and Springfield. Further south, the wind demolished tents and threatened a large marquee at the Venture South Scout camp in Riverton. Bad weather also caused the cancellation of several planned activities.

On 23 January, a mini-tornado was reported to have ripped the roof off a house in Waipukurau.

**Record or near record January extreme wind gusts were recorded at:**

Location	Extreme wind gust (km/hr)	Date of extreme gust	Year records began	Comments
Hamilton	72	7th	1991	3rd-highest
Turangi	104	8th	1973	Highest
Wanganui	98	7th	1977	Highest
Nelson	95	2nd	1972	Equal 2nd-highest
Blenheim	91	7th	1972	Equal 3rd-highest
Winchmore	96	10th	1970	2nd-highest
Ashburton	93	10th	1970	3rd-highest
Timaru	96	9th	1972	Equal 3rd-highest

**Temperatures**

The highest temperature observed during January 2013 was 35.1°C, recorded three times during the month: at Clyde on 5 January (an equal-high January record there), and at Gisborne on both 9 and 10 January. The lowest temperature was -0.5°C, recorded at Hanmer Forest on 18 January.

Temperatures yo-yoed somewhat during the month. Temperatures soared unusually high (even for January) in eastern regions during several strong northwesterly events (most notably on 5, 7, 10, 30 and 31 January), but an unusually cold southerly airstream affected the country on 18 January, leaving a brief legacy of cooler air.

**Record or near-record daily minimum air temperatures for January were recorded at:**

Location	Extreme minimum (°C)	Date of extreme temperature	Year records began	Comments
<b>Low records or near-records</b>				
Rotorua	3.8	19th	1964	3rd-lowest
Motu	0.2	19th	1990	2nd-lowest
Napier	4.8	19th	1868	3rd-lowest
Mahia	7.9	19th	1990	2nd-lowest
Motueka	3.8	18th	1956	Equal 2nd-lowest
Rotorua	3.8	19th	1964	3rd-lowest
<b>High records or near-records</b>				
Whakatane	20.4	15th	1975	Equal 4th-highest
Motu	16.8	14th	1990	4th-highest
Masterton	19.9	14th	1992	3rd-highest
Ngawi	20.9	13th	1972	4th-highest
Gisborne	24.7	14th	1940	Highest
Waipawa	20.6	15th	1945	Highest
Secretary Island	16.6	26th	1988	2nd-highest
Waiau	21.8	10th	1974	Highest
South West Cape	15.0	31st	1991	4th-highest

**Record or near-record daily maximum air temperatures for January were recorded at:**

Location	Extreme maximum (°C)	Date of extreme temperature	Year records began	Comments
<b>High records or near-records</b>				
Leigh	29.8	24th	1966	Highest
Whakatane	32.5	7th	1975	3rd-highest
New Plymouth	30.6	6th	1944	Highest
Masterton	33.1	31st	1992	Equal-highest
Takapau Plains	31.5	10th	1962	Equal 2nd-highest
Hastings	34.5	10th	1965	4th-highest
Waipawa	34.6	10th	1945	Highest
Levin	29.6	29th	1895	4th-highest
Reefton	32.4	30th	1960	4th-highest
Puyssegur Point	25.0	30th	1978	Highest
Mt Cook	32.8	5th	1929	Highest
Dunedin	34.1	5th	1962	2nd-highest
Lumsden	29.6	30th	1982	3rd-highest
Clyde	35.1	5th	1973	Equal highest
Alexandra	34.0	5th	1983	4th-highest
Tiwai Point	28.5	5th	1970	3rd-highest
Nugget Point	29.4	5th	1970	2nd-highest
<b>Low records or near-records</b>				
Dargaville	17.2	3rd	1951	2nd-lowest
Warkworth	17.8	3rd	1966	4th-lowest
Whenuapai	18.1	3rd	1951	3rd-lowest
Motueka	14.5	15th	1972	Lowest
Cheviot	14.2	15th	1982	4th-lowest

**Lightning and hail**

On 6 January, a spectacular lightning storm lit up the skies over Nelson. One lightning strike started a bush fire in the Hira Forest, others struck power lines knocking out power in the Dodson Valley area, and many alarms were set off by the storm.

On 9 January, a thunder storm crossed Canterbury and Otago, with several scrub fires caused by lightning strikes. In Wanaka, the swimming pool was struck by lightning, giving a mild electric shock to someone in the showers. Both this pool and the Arrowtown pool were closed as a precaution. The electrical storm lasted more than two hours in Omarama.

On 11 January, lightning again crossed South Canterbury starting scrub fires across the region.

On 13 January, a series of lightning strikes caused wildfires in rural Hawke's Bay.

On 16 January, thunder, lightning and hail were reported in Timaru.

On 17 January, a lightning strike caused a scrub fire close to homes in Picton. It was brought under control quickly, with no property damage.

### **Snow and ice**

On 3 January, snow fell on the Lindis Pass.

### **Cloud and fog**

On 13 January, low cloud and fog disrupted flights at Wellington Airport, with some domestic flights cancelled.

On 14 January, mist caused cancellations of flights into and out of Nelson Airport.

On 27 January, sea fog covered Otago Harbour.

### **For further information, please contact:**

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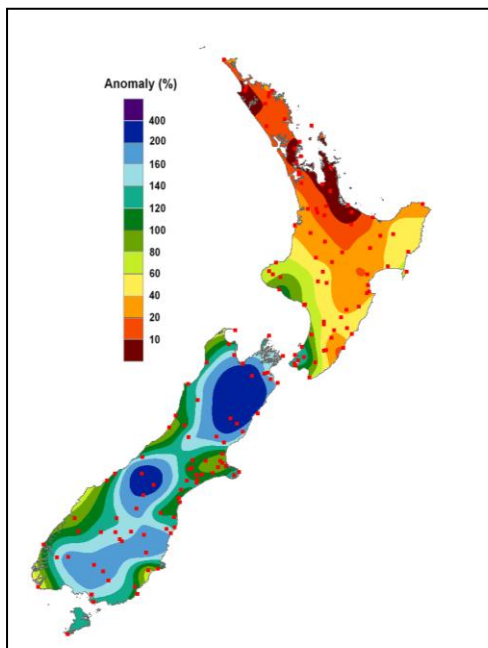
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*January 2013 rainfall, expressed as a percent of January normal. The teal and blue colours indicate rainfall exceeding 120 percent of January normal, such as seen across the bulk of the South Island. The brown colour shows rainfall less than 10% of January normal (Northland, Auckland, Coromandel and Bay of Plenty). Orange colours indicate rainfall less than 40 percent of January normal, and yellow indicates less than 60 percent of January normal (these two shades cover much of the North Island).*

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